AKIRA 20™

KATSUHIRO OTOMO

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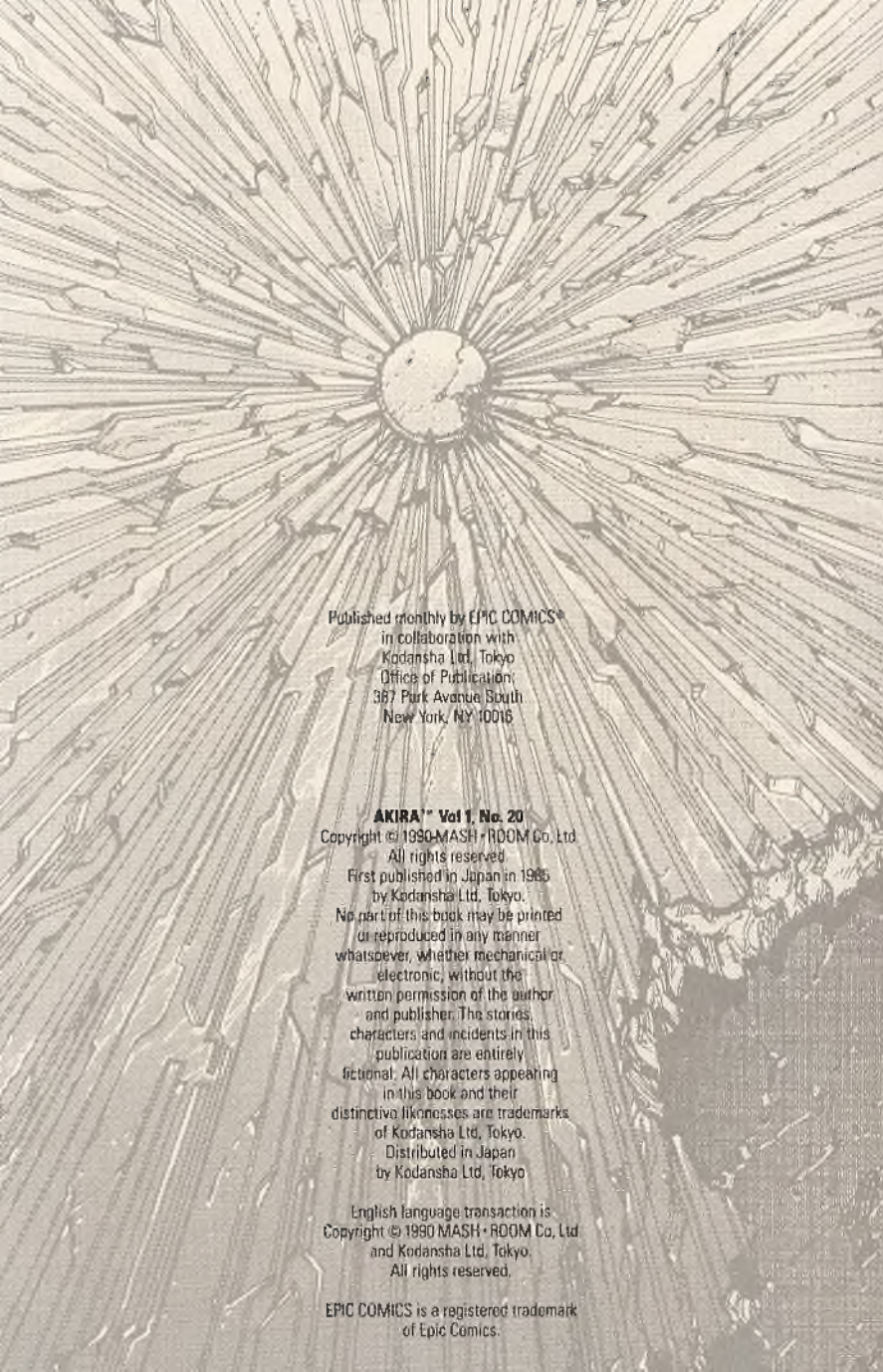

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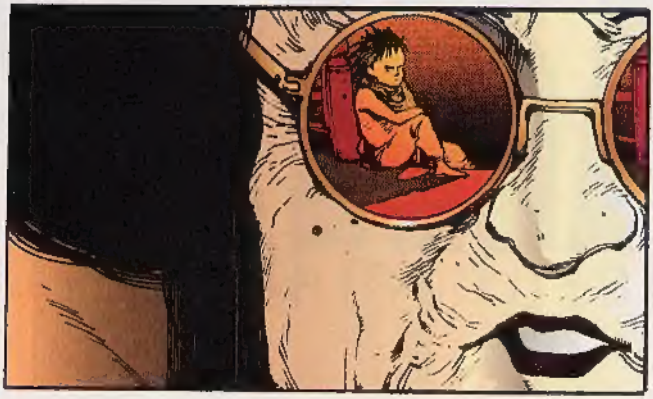


AKIRA

BY KATSUHIRO OTOMO

Chapter 20

REVELATIONS

WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE

Twenty-thirty. The world stands poised at the edge of World War IV. An explosion of thermo-nuclear proportions has been set off in **Neo-Tokyo**. The world, particularly the superpowers, wonders what has happened. In **Neo-Tokyo**, in a section known as the "old city", a band of teenaged delinquents led by **Kaneda** encounters **Number 26**, a child named **Takashi** who uses extraordinary telekinetic abilities to injure **Tetsuo**, one of Kaneda's close friends.

As a result, **Kaneda** and **Tetsuo** become entangled in a power struggle between a mysterious military and scientific organization led by the **Colonel** and an underground resistance group bent on putting a stop to the Colonel's activities.

Among the resistance, **Kaneda** meets **Kay**—a girl he alternately maddens and tries to seduce—and Kay's "brother" **Ryu**, and a formidable woman named **Chiyoko**. Other important resistance leaders include Ryu's superior—the opposition leader **Nezu**—and a powerful religious leader with precognitive gifts, **Lady Miyako**.

The **Colonel** has a number of psychic children like **Number 26** under his control. Each child possesses a distinct set of psychic talents and is identified by a number marked on the hand. At one time **Lady Miyako** was **Number 19** in this series. **Number 28** is **Akira**, so powerful that since the war he has been suspended in cryogenic sleep.

The Colonel's staff conducts experiments which awaken tremendous telepathic potential in **Tetsuo**, who is redubbed **Number 41**. Able to shrug off the most serious injuries, **Tetsuo** goes on a killing spree, murdering one of Kaneda's friends and even attacking **Kaneda**. Then, followed by **Kay** and **Kaneda**, **Tetsuo** seeks out **Akira**, whose powers he thinks may rival his own.

Akira's power responds to Tetsuo's psychic energy. His cryogenic chamber cracks from within and **Akira** emerges, dazed after his long sleep.

Terrified of what may occur, the **Colonel** summons the powerful SOL military satellite and orders that its laser cannon be fired at **Tetsuo** and **Akira**. **Kay** and **Kaneda** save **Akira**,

Chiyoko | The Colonel | Tetsuo | Masaru

but **Tetsuo** is less fortunate. The laser strikes his left arm.

Neo-Tokyo is placed in a state of military emergency following the disaster. "Caretaker robots" patrol the streets, dealing harshly with the looters and restoring order. The **Colonel** stages a successful coup d'etat.

Nezu betrays the resistance, planning to kidnap and exploit **Akira**, but is thwarted by a team of young psychics trained by **Lady Miyako**. **Nezu** orders his men to kill Miyako's psychics and the resistance fighters, and **Ryu** guns his former master down. **Ryu** leaves **Nezu** for dead.

Ultimately, **Sakaki**—the sole survivor of Lady Miyako's group — is cornered by the Colonel's troops, along with **Ryu**, **Akira**, **Kaneda**, **Kay**, and **Chiyoko**. **Sakaki** is killed trying to escape. All seems well when **Takashi** fondly greets **Akira** and reintroduces him to their fellow psychics **Kiyoko** and **Masaru**. Then **Nezu**, dying and determined for revenge, arrives and tries to kill **Akira**, killing **Takashi** instead.

The trauma of Takashi's death galvanizes **Akira**, who fully awakens and unleashes a coherent light blast powerful enough to devastate the entire city. Acting quickly, **Masaru** and **Kiyoko** sweep most of the people in the area upward. **Kaneda** is last seen vanishing toward the sky. In the wake of the disaster, **Lady Miyako** opens her temple and offers shelter and comfort to those in need, gathering large groups of followers.

Neo-Tokyo is completely cut off from the rest of the outside world, and in the western part of the city the **Great Tokyo Empire** is formed—a monarchy with **Akira** on the throne and **Tetsuo** as his Prime Minister. The Empire is eventually

Kiyoko **Akira** **Lady Miyako** **Kay**

infiltrated by teams of spies sent from outside to learn what is happening in the city.

The **Colonel** is alone, living in hiding. **Masaru** and **Kiyoko** are sick with withdrawal from the drug which augments and channels psychic powers. **Kiyoko** tells **Kay** to find **Number 19**. The two meet with **Lady Miyako**, who gives them medicine to help **Kiyoko** and **Masaru**. **Lady Miyako** asks that **Kay** bring the other psychics to her.

Most of the spies from the outside are hunted down and killed. Only their leader, **Lt. Yamada**, escapes. When Tetsuo's followers are on the verge of catching **Yamada** again, **Ryu** appears and leads him to safety. **Ryu** attempts to gain Yamada's trust. But the **Lieutenant** refuses to tell **Ryu** who has sent him or let **Ryu** join him. **Yamada** does, however, reveal that Russia has conquered part of Japan, and that the Americans' fear of **Akira** makes them reluctant to get involved.

Three young girls are taken from the Empire's breadline for the pleasure of **Tetsuo**. He orders all three to swallow diluted, recreational strength capsules of the mind-altering drugs. As the orgy begins, so does an odyssey into Tetsuo's mind. He relives his past, recalling moments of his friendship with the cocky, maddening **Kaneda**. **Tetsuo** awakens to discover two of his bedmates dead. Only **Kaori**—who secretly palmed her medicine—has survived. **Tetsuo** is convinced that in some way his mental resonance with **Akira** is responsible for the odd mental voyage. He takes a peek into the mind of his great Emperor—a peek which leaves him a withdrawn, shuddering wreck. When **Tetsuo** recovers, he decides that **Lady Miyako** may be able to explain matters to him. Taking a hefty dose of power-enhancing medication, **Tetsuo** teleports away in search of the religious leader.

Knowing that Tetsuo's followers are closing in, **Kay** and **Chiyoko** try to move **Masaru** and **Kiyoko** to Lady Miyako's temple. They are attacked before they can do so, and **Kiyoko** is carried off. **Chiyoko** is badly wounded, but she gets **Kiyoko** back just beyond the borders of Akira's empire. Meanwhile **Kay**, carrying **Masaru** to safety is harried by a street gang. One of the gang tries to extort goods from her in return for safe passage. Condemning the man as a common thief, **Kay** aims her gun.

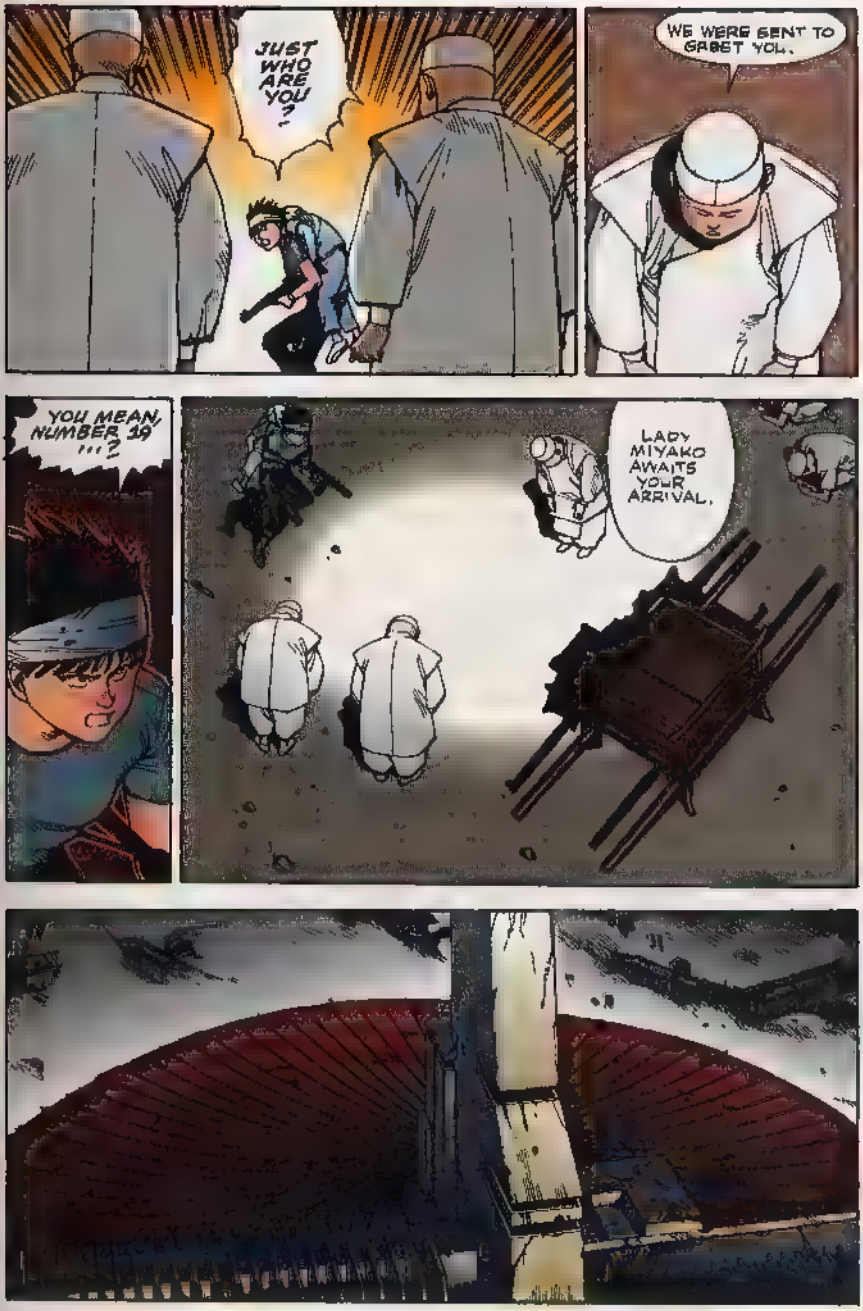
Kaori Seer Lt. Yamada Ryu

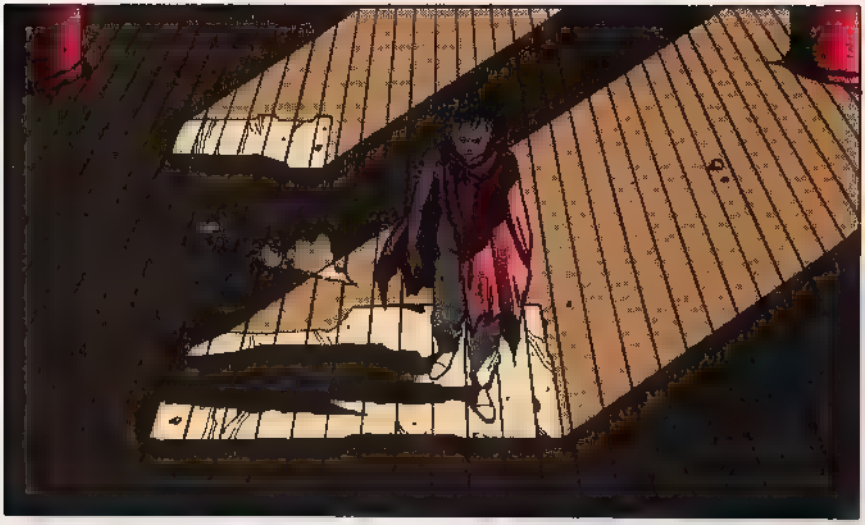
TAK
!
TAKE IT EASY! I DON'T WANNA HURT NOBODY!
FREEZE!
BLAM
YOU'VE GOT ME ALL WRONG! I'M A LOVER, NOT A FIGHTER!
LET'S MAKE A DEAL!
JUST TELL ME WHAT YOU WANT. WE CAN WORK SOMETHING OUT.
I DON'T UNDER-STAND.
MEDICINE, FOOD... WE'LL AGREE ON A SCALE OF PAYMENT. YOU GIVE ME A LITTLE LOVING...
Swape
...I GIVE YOU A GOOD HOURLY RATE.
UHH... WHAT'S THE ROCK FOR?
POW

LET'S GO.
GRNT
GROSS. SOMEONE SMASHED HIS HEAD IN.
CHECK IT OUT!
HE DIED HAPPY.
A MANLY MAN TO THE END.
SHE WENT THATAWAY!

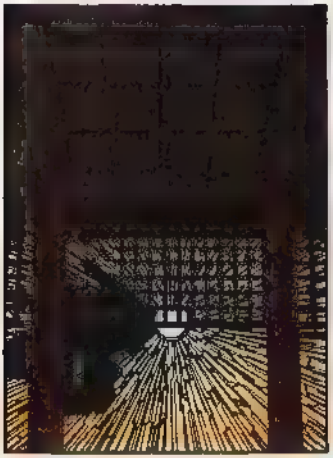
WHA-HOO!!
I'VE GOTTA GET OUT OF HERE!
?!

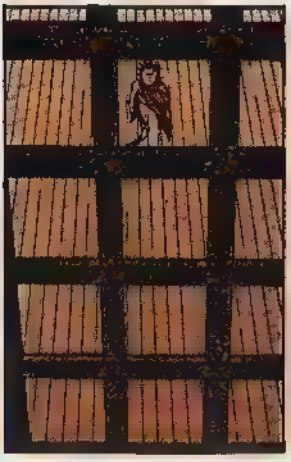
.....
YOU, HONORED LADY, ARE KAY, ARE YOU NOT?
HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT?!
THERE SHE IS!
DAMN!
GASP!
STOP!
DON'T SHOOT THEM!
WHY NOT?!


JUST WHO ARE YOU?!
WE WERE SENT TO GREET YOU.
YOU MEAN, NUMBER 39!!!?
LADY MIYAKO AWAITS YOUR ARRIVAL.



WELCOME...
...NUMBER 41.





.....

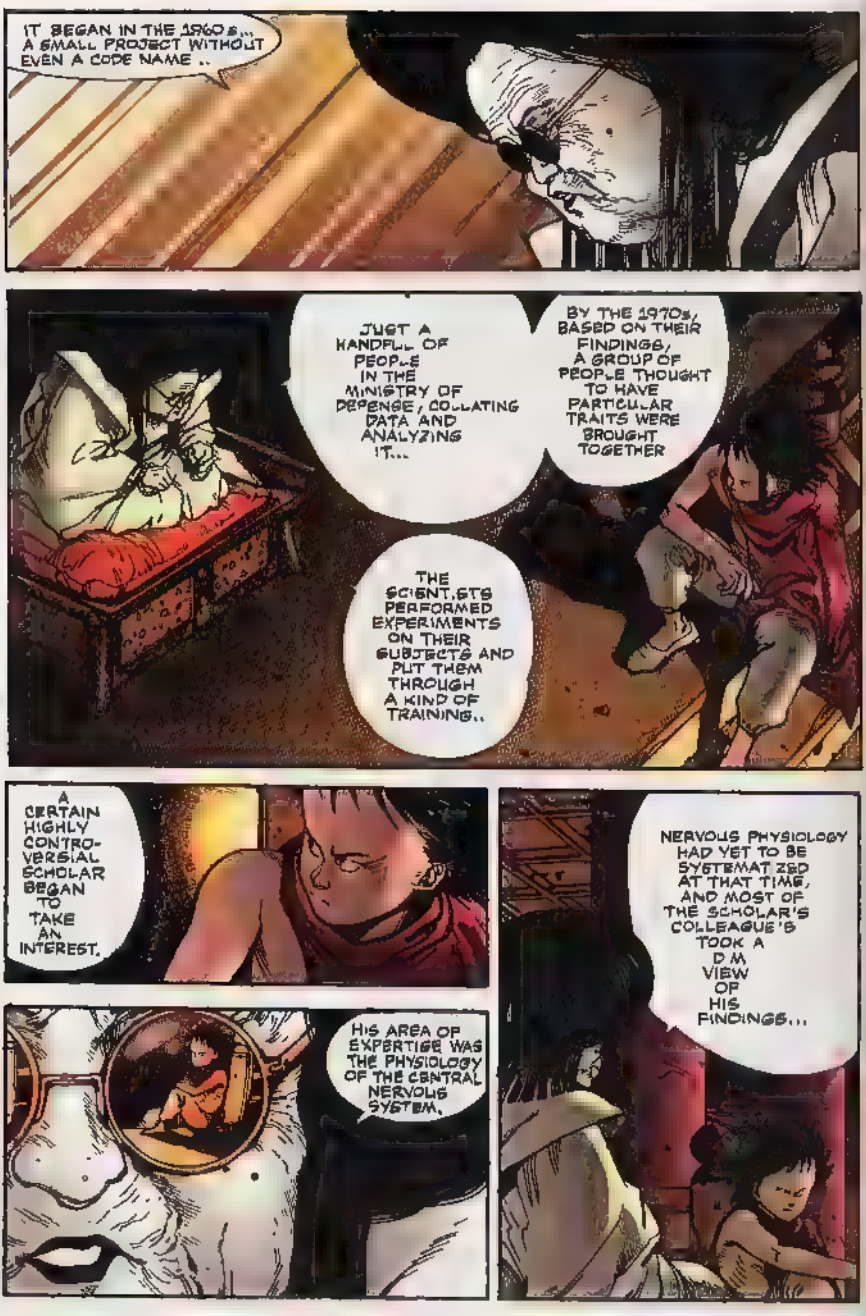
THIS PLACE IS... IT LOOKS LIKE...
DOES IT STRIKE YOU AS FAMILIAR?
HEH...
"THAT'S QUITE A DESIGN YOU'VE GOT BEHIND YOU.
"THEN THE BAS RELIEF BEHINDS YOU OF SOMETHING YOU'VE SEEN BEFORE?

HAVE... YOU SEEN IT, TOO?
LONG, LONG AGO... WHEN I WAS IN THE SECRET LAB.
I DIDN'T SEE IT AS CLEARLY AS YOU DID...
BUT I LIVED ON, AND ALTHOUGH --AS A RESULT-- MY GROWTH WAS STUNTED AND I LOST MY SIGHT...
...TODAY I SEE THE WORLD WITH A CLARITY THAT WAS IMPOSSIBLE IN THE PAST.
I NEED THAT POWER.
OF WHAT DO YOU WISH TO KNOW?
AH RA.

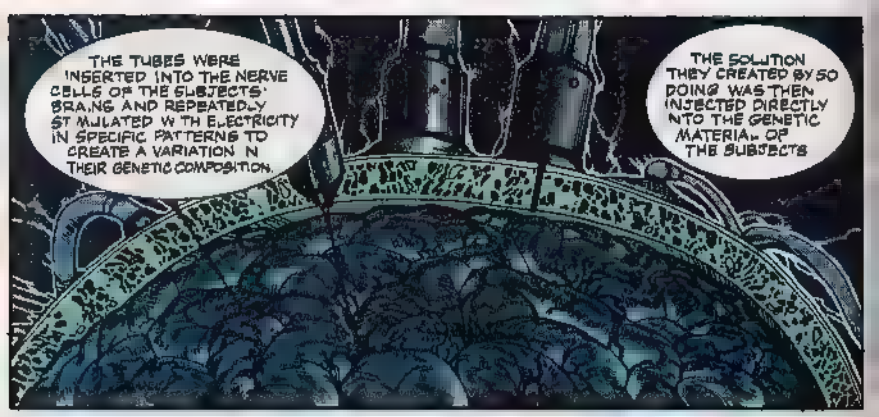
BUDDABUDDA
HEAVE!
tip tap
!
DIIEE!

WHAM
KRAK
BLAM
THAT'S ENOUGH FOR NOW. FOLLOW HER ON FOOT
WHATEVER YOU DO DON'T HURT THE CHILD I DON'T WANT THAT LITTLE GIRL GETTING SO MUCH AS A SCRATCH.
HER AMMO CAN'T LAST FOREVER
TAK TAK TAK

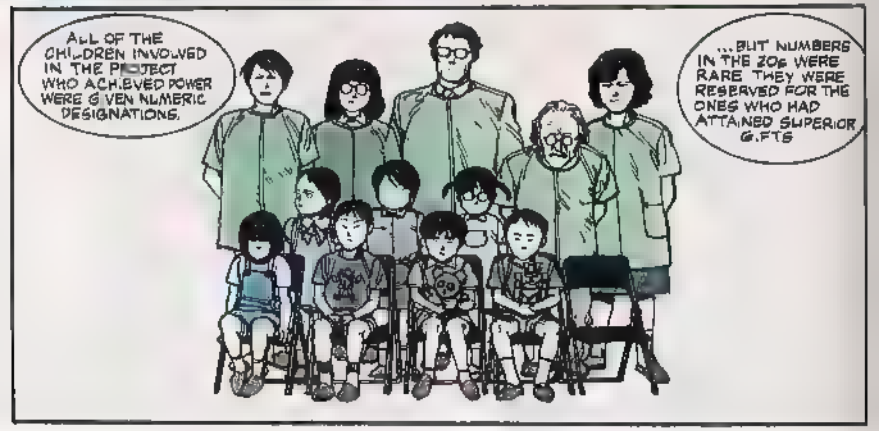
GO AROUND THE SIDE! HEAD HER OFF!


IT BEGAN IN THE 1960s... A SMALL PROJECT WITHOUT EVEN A CODE NAME ..
JUST A HANDFUL OF PEOPLE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE, COLLATING DATA AND ANALYZING IT...
BY THE 1970s, BASED ON THEIR FINDINGS, A GROUP OF PEOPLE THOUGHT TO HAVE PARTICULAR TRAITS WERE BROUGHT TOGETHER
THE SCIENTISTS PERFORMED EXPERIMENTS ON THEIR SUBJECTS AND PUT THEM THROUGH A KIND OF TRAINING..
A CERTAIN HIGHLY CONTROVERSIAL SCHOLAR BEGAN TO TAKE AN INTEREST.
HIS AREA OF EXPERTISE WAS THE PHYSIOLOGY OF THE CENTRAL NERVOUS SYSTEM.
NERVOUS PHYSIOLOGY HAD YET TO BE SYSTEMATIZED AT THAT TIME, AND MOST OF THE SCHOLAR'S COLLEAGUES TOOK A DIM VIEW OF HIS FINDINGS...

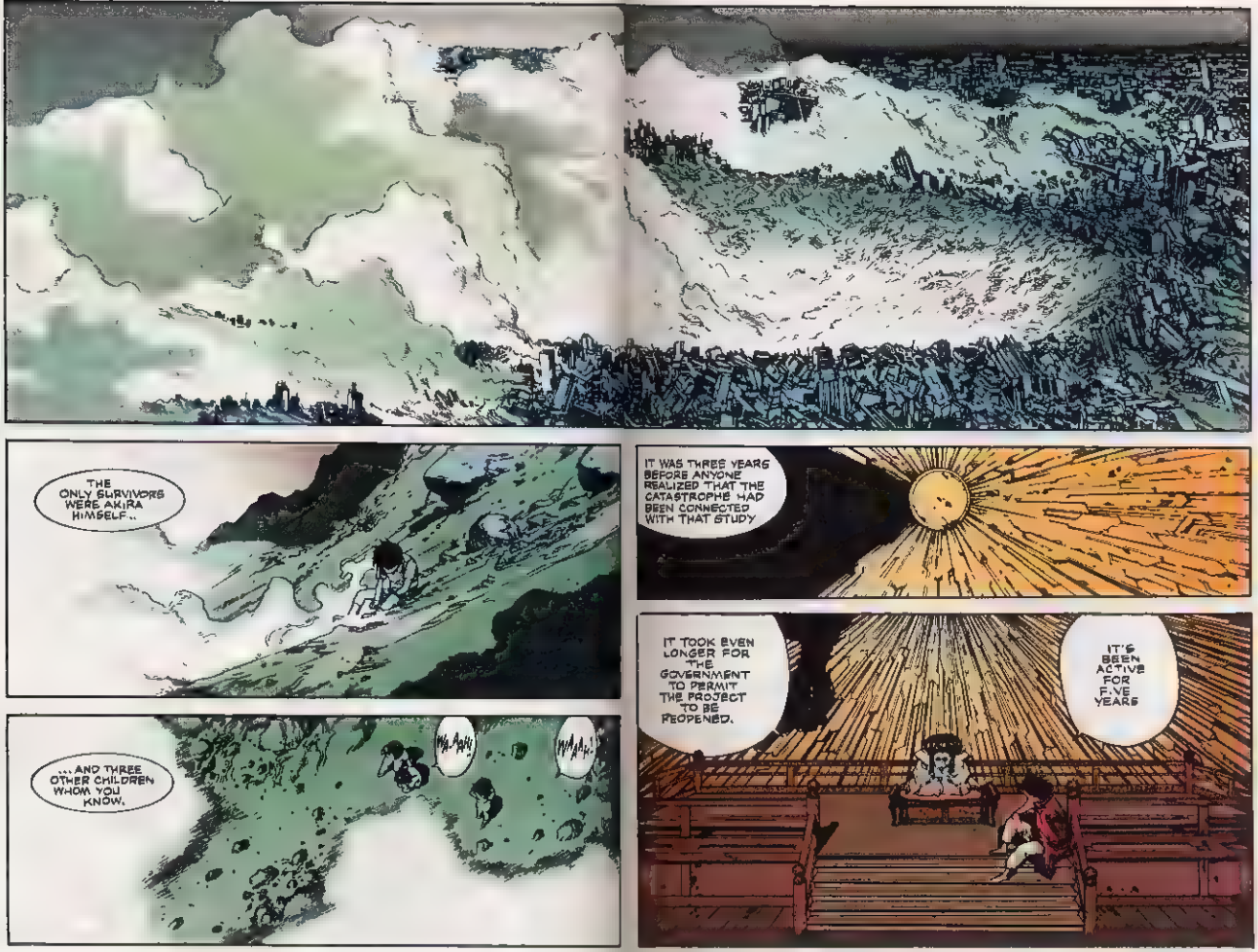
...BUT THE FACT REMAINS THAT AFTER HE JOINED THE STUDY DRAMATIC RESULTS WERE ACHIEVED
RUMOR HAS IT HIS GUINEA PIGS WERE LIVING HUMAN BEINGS.
THERE ARE TWO VERSIONS OF THE STORY, ONE STATES THAT THE GOVERNMENT GAVE IS FULL APPROVAL.
THE OTHER IS THAT THE SCHOLAR WAS SOLELY RESPONSIBLE. AS NO ONE KNOWS THE TRUTH, YOU MAY BELIEVE WHICHEVER ONE SATISFIES YOU.
THESE EXPERIMENTS, WHAT DID THEY USE? OPERATIONS? DRUGS?
HMM... HOW BEST TO EXPLAIN...?
THEY MADE TINY GLASS TUBES, NARROWER THAN THE SMALLEST BLOOD VESSELS...
...AND FILLED THESE TUBES WITH SALT WATER.


THE TUBES WERE INSERTED INTO THE NERVE CELLS OF THE SUBJECTS' BRAINS AND REPEATEDLY STIMULATED WITH ELECTRICITY IN SPECIFIC PATTERNS TO CREATE A VARIATION IN THEIR GENETIC COMPOSITION.
THE SOLUTION THEY CREATED BY SO DOING WAS THEN INJECTED DIRECTLY INTO THE GENETIC MATERIAL OF THE SUBJECTS

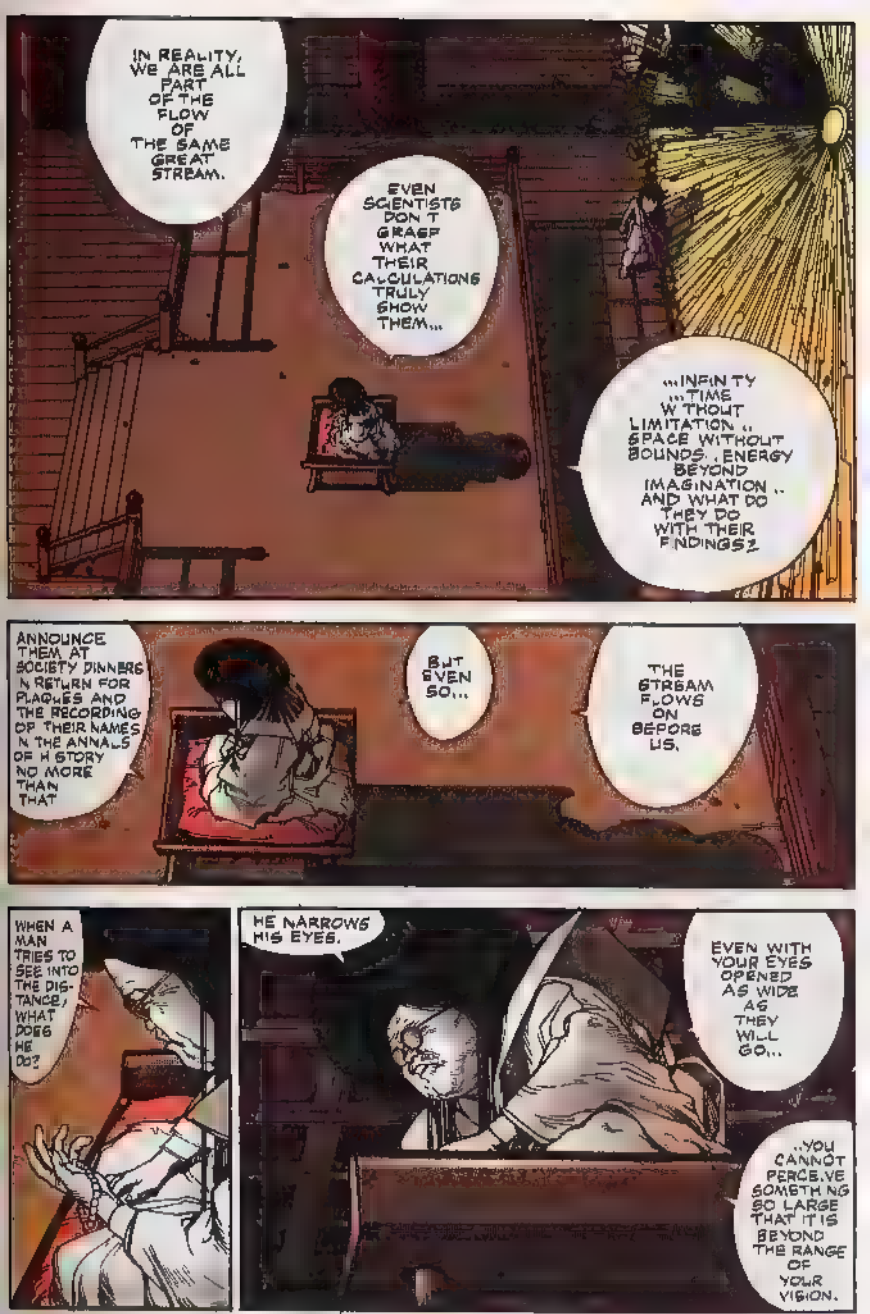
THESE CHILDREN WERE GIVEN CODE DESIGNATIONS...
...IN THE 20s

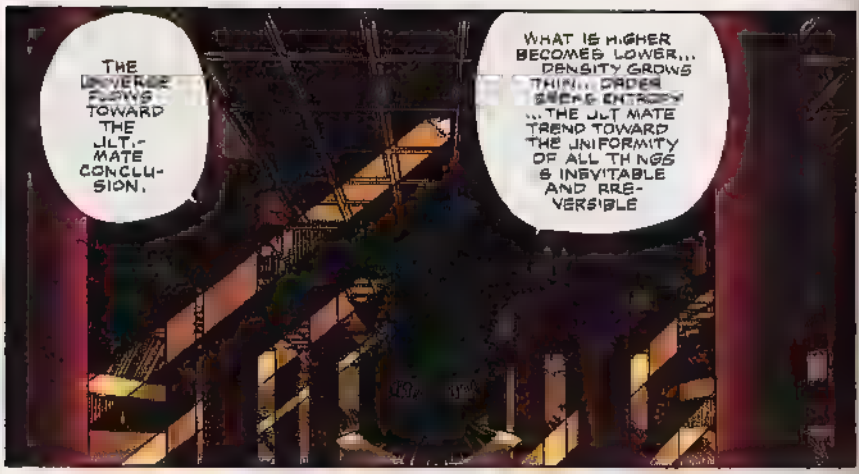

ALL OF THE CHILDREN INVOLVED IN THE PROJECT WHO ACHIEVED POWER WERE GIVEN NUMERIC DESIGNATIONS.
...BUT NUMBERS IN THE 20s WERE RARE. THEY WERE RESERVED FOR THE ONES WHO HAD ATTAINED SUPERIOR GIFTS

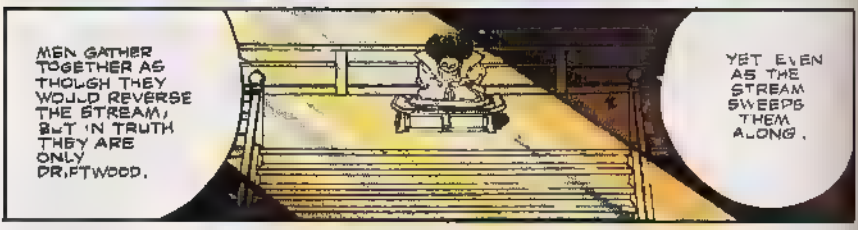
NICE. CROSS BETWEEN A BOOBY PRIZE AND A PURPLE HEART.
AND THE BOY THEY CALLED.
...NUMBER 28...
28
...DESTROYED TOKYO...
...THE SCHOLAR WHO CREATED H.M. AND ALL RECORD OF THE PROJECT.

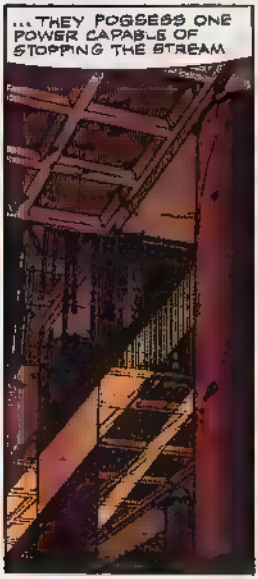

THE ONLY SURVIVORS WERE AKIRA HIMSELF..
...AND THREE OTHER CHILDREN WHOM YOU KNOW.
WAAH!
WAAH!
IT WAS THREE YEARS BEFORE ANYONE REALIZED THAT THE CATASTROPHE HAD BEEN CONNECTED WITH THAT STUDY
IT TOOK EVEN LONGER FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO PERMIT THE PROJECT TO BE REOPENED.
IT'S BEEN ACTIVE FOR FIVE YEARS

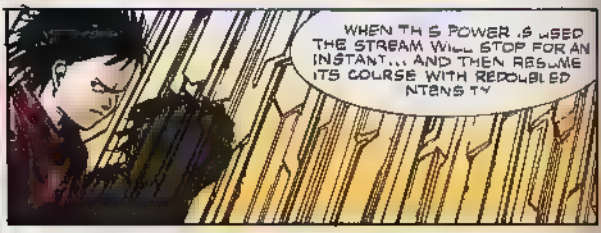
BUT...
...THAT DOESN'T EXPLAIN WHY AKIRA'S POWERS ARE SO IMMENSE
HOW DO YOU EXPLAIN YOUR OWN POWERS?
YOU CAN MOVE THINGS BY THE POWER OF YOUR MIND AND DESTROY WITH BUT A THOUGHT
IF YOU CHOSE, YOU COULD LAY WASTE TO ALL THE ENERGY MANKIND HAS AMASSED.
COMPARED TO THE POWER OF YOUR WILL, THE ENERGY MANKIND HAS USED TO DATE IS NO MORE THAN PUFFS OF AIR.
IT IS ONLY WHEN HE IS AFRAID THAT HE CONSIDERS THE OTHER WORLD, AND THEN HE WILL GLADLY SELL HIS SOUL TO WHATEVER GOD OR BUDDHA OFFERS HIM HOPE
MAN IS WOEFULLY SHORTSIGHTED.
HE HUDDLES UPON THE GROUND STARING DOWN AT HIS OWN FEET

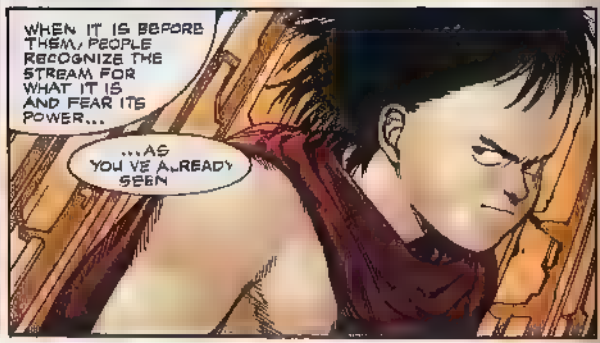

IN REALITY, WE ARE ALL PART OF THE FLOW OF THE SAME GREAT STREAM.
EVEN SCIENTISTS DON'T GRASP WHAT THEIR CALCULATIONS TRULY SHOW THEM...
...INFINITY ...TIME WITHOUT LIMITATION .. SPACE WITHOUT BOUNDS . ENERGY BEYOND IMAGINATION .. AND WHAT DO THEY DO WITH THEIR FINDINGS?
ANNOUNCE THEM AT SOCIETY DINNERS IN RETURN FOR PLAQUES AND THE RECORDING OF THEIR NAMES IN THE ANNALS OF HISTORY NO MORE THAN THAT
BUT EVEN SO...
THE STREAM FLOWS ON BEFORE US.
WHEN A MAN TRIES TO SEE INTO THE DISTANCE, WHAT DOES HE DO?
HE NARROWS HIS EYES.
EVEN WITH YOUR EYES OPENED AS WIDE AS THEY WILL GO...
..YOU CANNOT PERCEIVE SOMETHING SO LARGE THAT IT IS BEYOND THE RANGE OF YOUR VISION.


THE UNIVERSE FLOWS TOWARD THE ULTIMATE CONCLUSION.
WHAT IS HIGHER BECOMES LOWER... DENSITY GROWS THIN... ORDER BREAKS ENTROPY ...THE ULTIMATE TREND TOWARD THE UNIFORMITY OF ALL THINGS IS INEVITABLE AND IRREVERSIBLE


MEN GATHER TOGETHER AS THOUGH THEY WOULD REVERSE THE STREAM, BUT IN TRUTH THEY ARE ONLY DRIFTWOOD.
YET EVEN AS THE STREAM SWEEPS THEM ALONG,


...THEY POSSESS ONE POWER CAPABLE OF STOPPING THE STREAM.


WHEN THIS POWER IS USED THE STREAM WILL STOP FOR AN INSTANT... AND THEN RESUME ITS COURSE WITH REDOUBLED INTENSITY


WHEN IT IS BEFORE THEM, PEOPLE RECOGNIZE THE STREAM FOR WHAT IT IS AND FEAR ITS POWER...
...AS YOU'VE ALREADY SEEN

LOOK BEYOND FORM AND CONSIDER SUBSTANCE.
AKIRA IS NOT IN THE STREAM.
THAT STUFF ABOUT STREAMS AND VISION IS JUST METAPHYSICAL BULLSHIT!
I WANT TO KNOW SOMETHING CONCRETE! WHAT THE HELL IS AKIRA?!
PEOPLE IN THE STREAM WILL NEVER UNDERSTAND.
WELL, YOU TALK LIKE YOU'VE GOT A HANDLE ON IT!
DO YOU UNDERSTAND ALL THIS?!

THAT IS WHAT YOU MUST LEARN FOR YOURSELF, NUMBER 41.
YOU ARE THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN FIND THE ANSWERS. TO DO SO IS YOUR DESTINY.
SAY WHAT ?!
YOU'D LIKE THAT, HUNH?
WHY ME?
I DON'T WANT THE JOB! I CAN'T DO IT!
ONE LOOK INSIDE HIS MIND WAS PLENTY! I ALMOST GOT BLOWN AWAY!
CHUCKLE WHY, NUMBER 41, THIS DOESN'T SOUND LIKE YOU AT ALL.
CALL IT WHATEVER YOU LIKE, BUT THAT WAS THE LAST LOOK I'LL EVER TAKE INSIDE HIS HEAD! I'LL NEVER DO IT AGAIN!
ARE YOU AFRAID ?

IT IS TRUE THAT AKIRA'S POWER IS BEYOND MEASURE...
...BUT THAT IS SAID OF YOU, TOO.
ALTHOUGH, I DO SEE YOUR POINT. AT YOUR PRESENT LEVEL OF POWER, IT WOULD BE BEYOND YOU AS A PSYCHIC YOU GROVEL AT AKIRA'S FEET
MY PRESENT LEVEL OF POWER...?
SURELY YOU MUST REALIZE THAT THE DRUGS YOU TAKE INHIBIT DEVELOPMENT OF YOUR POWER.
MIND YOUR OWN BUSINESS.
IT'S TRUE, THEY EXPEDITE RELEASE OF YOUR MENTAL ENERGIES, BUT THEY ARE A SHORT CUT...
WHICH PREVENT YOU FROM BECOMING ALL YOU COULD NATURALLY BE

WHEN YOU CAN OVERCOME YOUR OWN WEAKNESS, THE POWER WILL FLOW FROM YOU FREELY
SHUT UP, YOU OLD BAG! I DIDN'T COME HERE TO LISTEN TO A LECTURE!
F YOU WOULD BECOME CLOSE TO AKRA, YOU MUST LEARN SELF CONTROL.
.....

OH, GOOD. YOU'RE AWAKE
JUST IN TIME FOR DINNER. DOESN'T IT SMELL GOOD?
I'LL KEEP YOU COMPANY WHILE YOU'RE EATING SO YOU WON'T BE LONESOME

AAUGH!
TAK TAK TAK
AAUGH!
BLAM

ARGH!
POW
POW
KLIK
WHATSAMATTER, HONEY? NO MORE BULLETS?
HA-HA-HA!
PUFF
PUFF
PUFF
PUFF
PUFF
IT'S NOT OVER YET.

SO THAT'S T.
I SEE NOW WHY OUR MEN HAVE BEEN HAVING SUCH A HARD TIME,
SIR!
COME HERE
Snap
TH S IS YOUR FIRST ASSIGNMENT. DON T LET US DOWN.
I WON'T!
.....?
MM. HMM.
?HRARM!?
WHAT?

YAAAH!
FOOM
WHAT A PAIN IN THE ASS.
BE CAREFUL, YOU IDIOT! REMEMBER THE CHILD!
RIGHT!
FWOOM
WAUGH!
GET THEM!

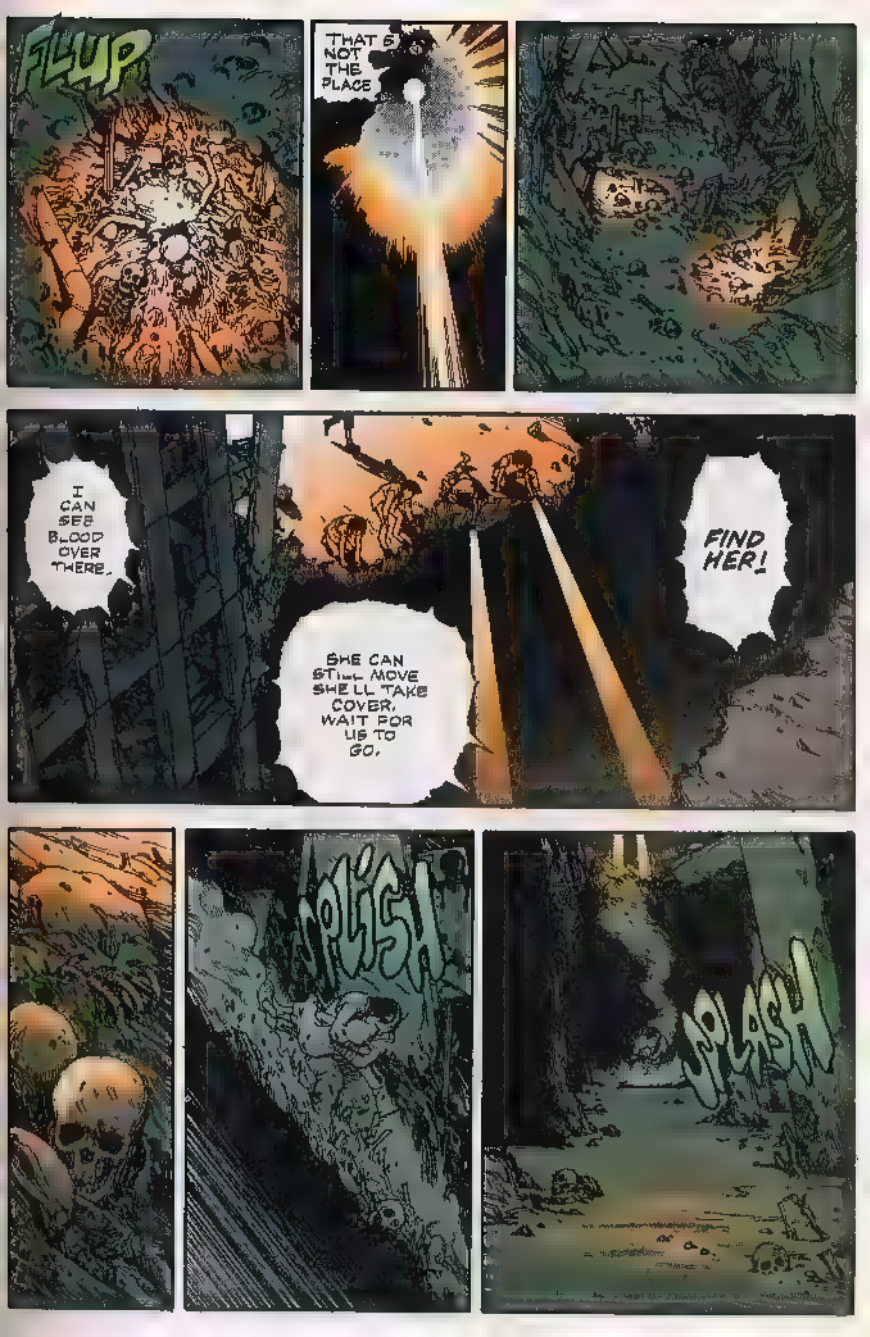
GASP!
HMMM?

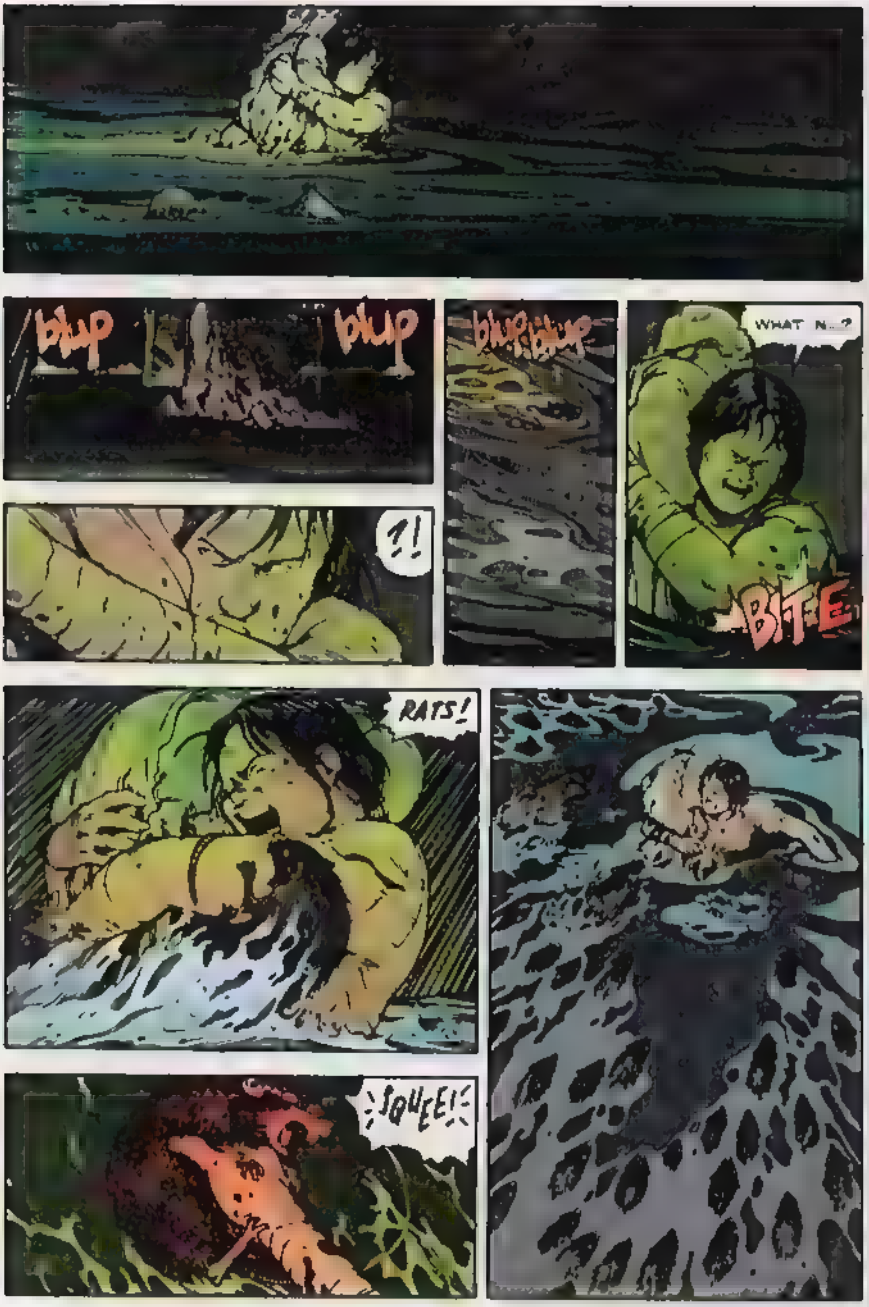
CHAARGE!
SWUP
AIIEE!
MMM

WHOOSH
KLAK
EAT THIS!!
HYYAAAA!
!
AGH!
KRUNK
OH-!

EEP!
KRUMBLE
YIKES!
STOP IT!
WHOOOM
DAMNATION
YOU IDIOT!
BAP
IS THAT YOUR IDEA OF BEING CARE-FUL?
SOMEONE BRING A LIGHT!
DAMN

THUD
!
WHERE ARE WE?!


FLUP
THAT IS NOT THE PLACE
I CAN SEE BLOOD OVER THERE.
FIND HER!
SHE CAN STILL MOVE SHE'LL TAKE COVER, WAIT FOR US TO GO.
SPLISH
SPLASH

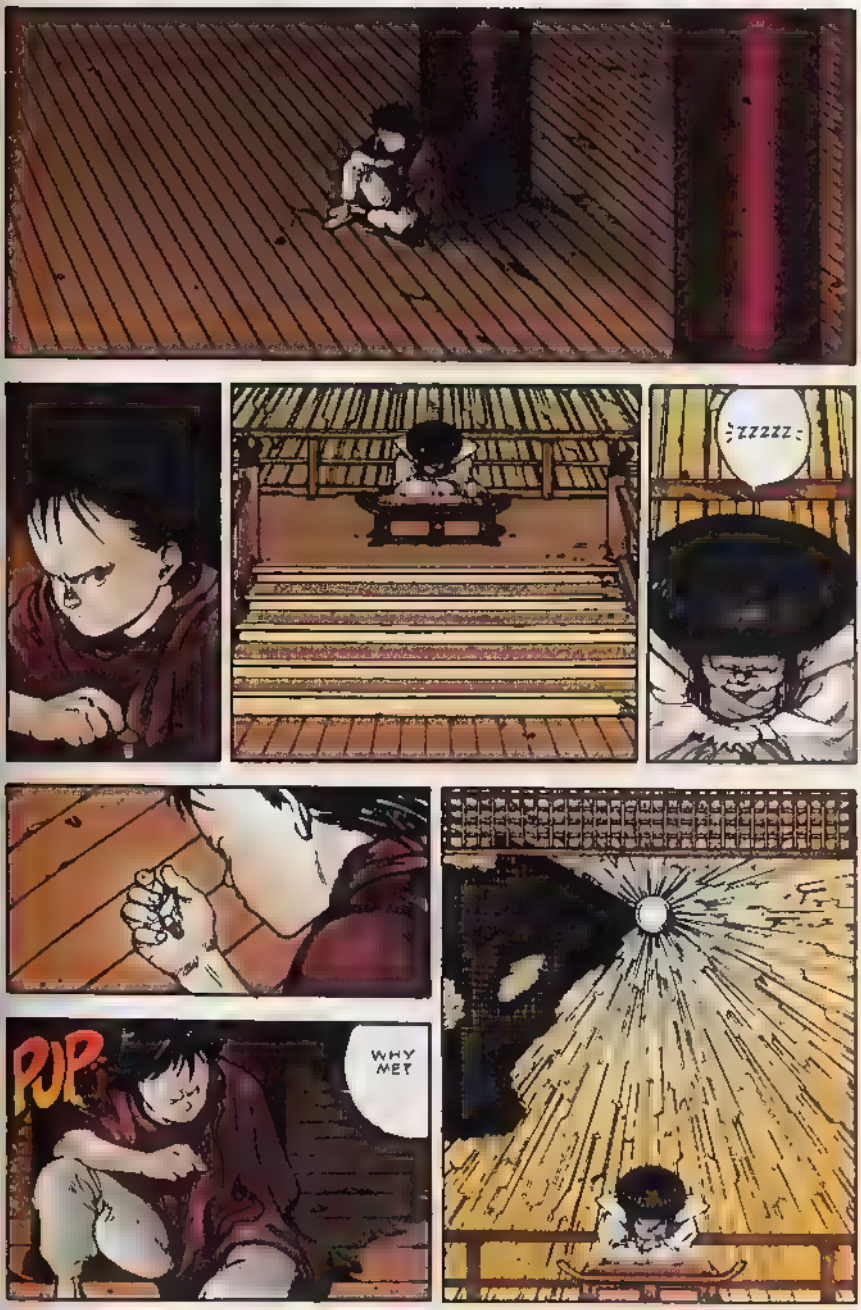

blup
blup
blup blup
WHAT N...?
BITE
?!
RATS!
SQUEE!

SMASH
RRR...
SPLAT
SQUEE
WHO..?!

YOU!
?!
THE COLONEL!
THE GREAT MILITARY HERO!
WE MEET AGA N
EH?
KYAHO

WHERE ARE YOU TAKING HER?
THAT'S NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS.
SPLASH
SPLUSH
THEY MADE IT DOWN HERE
WHO ARE THEY?
LET'S GO. YOU CAN EXPLAIN LATER. FOLLOW ME
SWUP
TH S WAY!
WHAT S TH S CRAP?
OWW!
THERE ARE RATS DOWN HERE!
SOMETH NG BIT ME!

CAN YOU MANAGE?
I CAN KEEP UP FINE.
THIS WAY!


zzzzz
PJP
WHY ME?

HAH!
OWOOOOOOOO..
!
IT'S MORNING

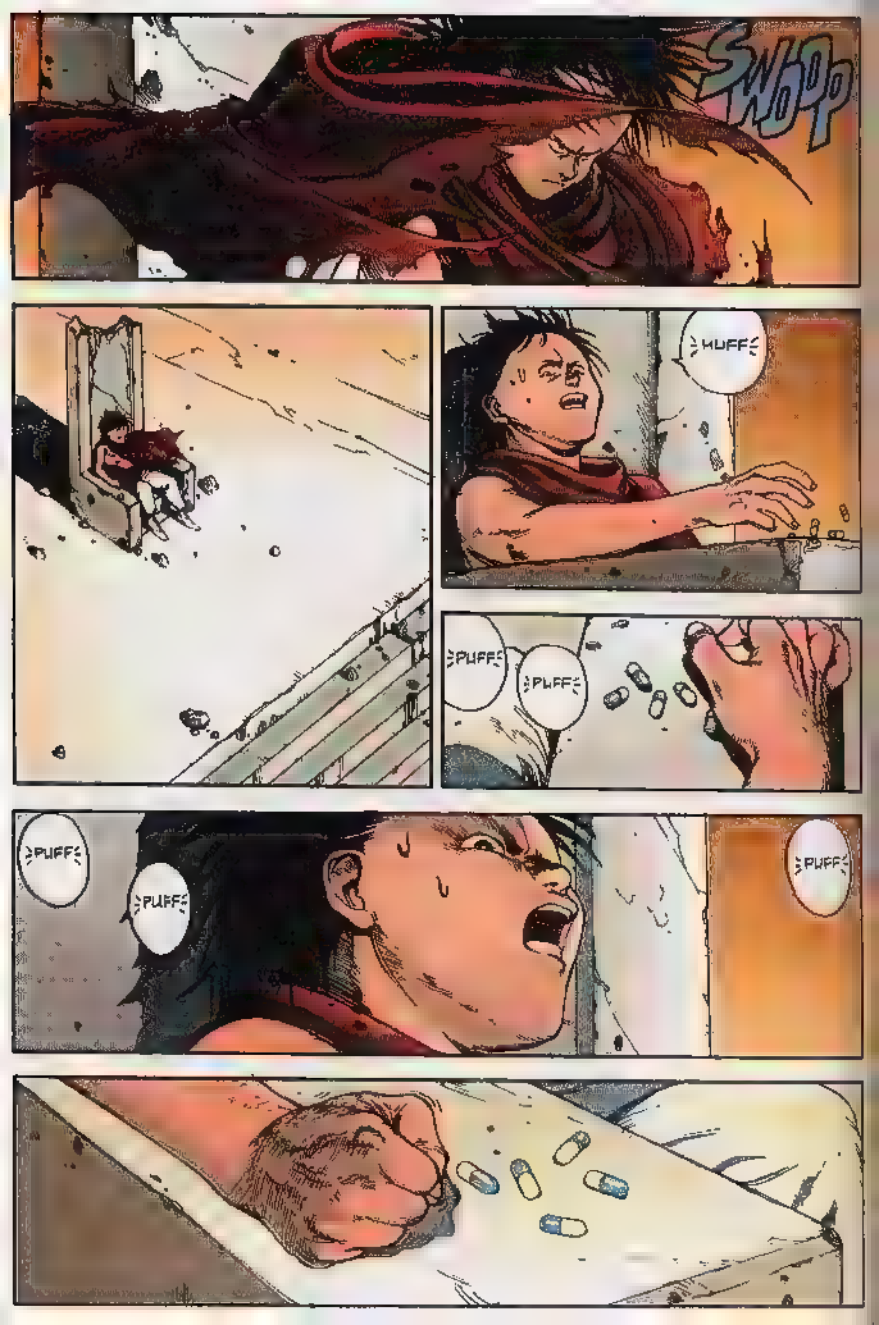
I WISH I KNEW HOW CH.YOKO IS DOING
LOOK AT THAT !

MONKS FROM THE TEMPLE! THEY NEVER GO OUTSIDE!
THEY STICK TO THE SHRINE LIKE GLUE! AND THEY'VE GOT SOMEONE WITH THEM!
...A KID!
A WOMAN...
...AND...
HEY!
EARLY BIRD CATCHES THE WORM!
A STREAM...?

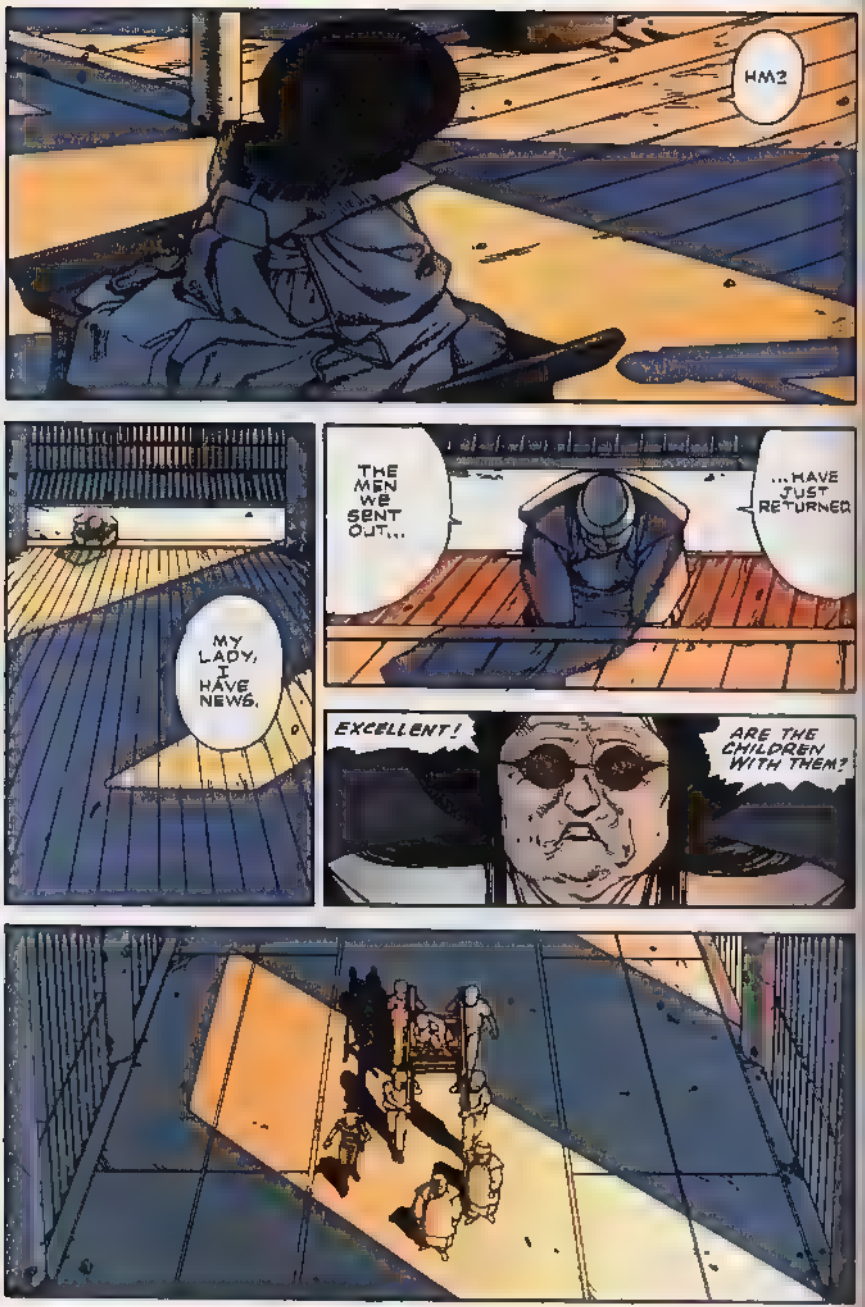
ANY LUCK?
NOT A SIGN OF THEM?
THEY RE NOT HERE!
THEY HAVE TO BE THERE SOMEWHERE! CHECK THE BOTTOM! THEY MAY HAVE DROWNED!
THAT WOUND. .
ARE YOU ALL R.GHT?
PERFECT.

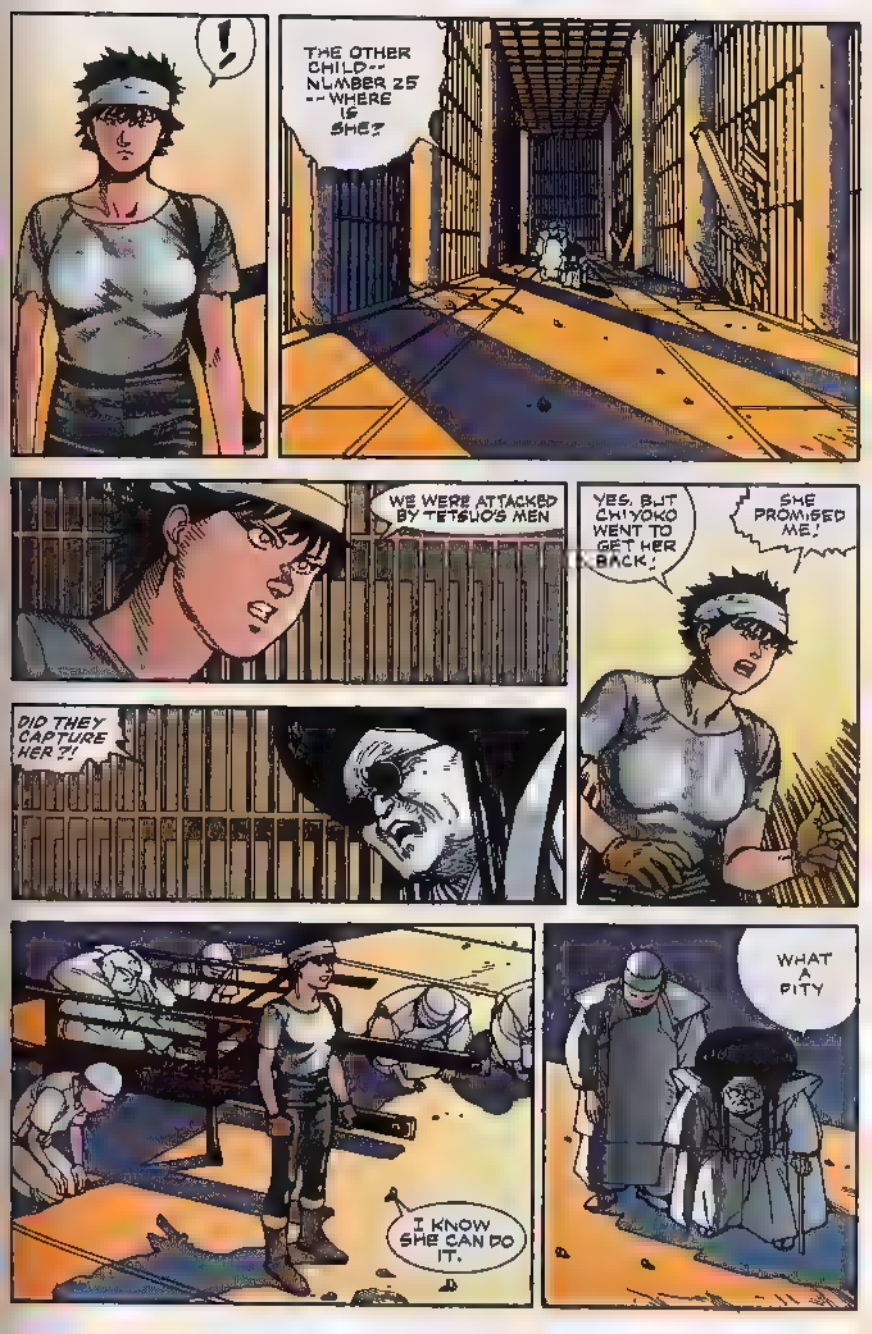
NO!
GET HOLD OF YOURSELF !
KLAK
NOW!!

!
MAESTRO TETSUO !!

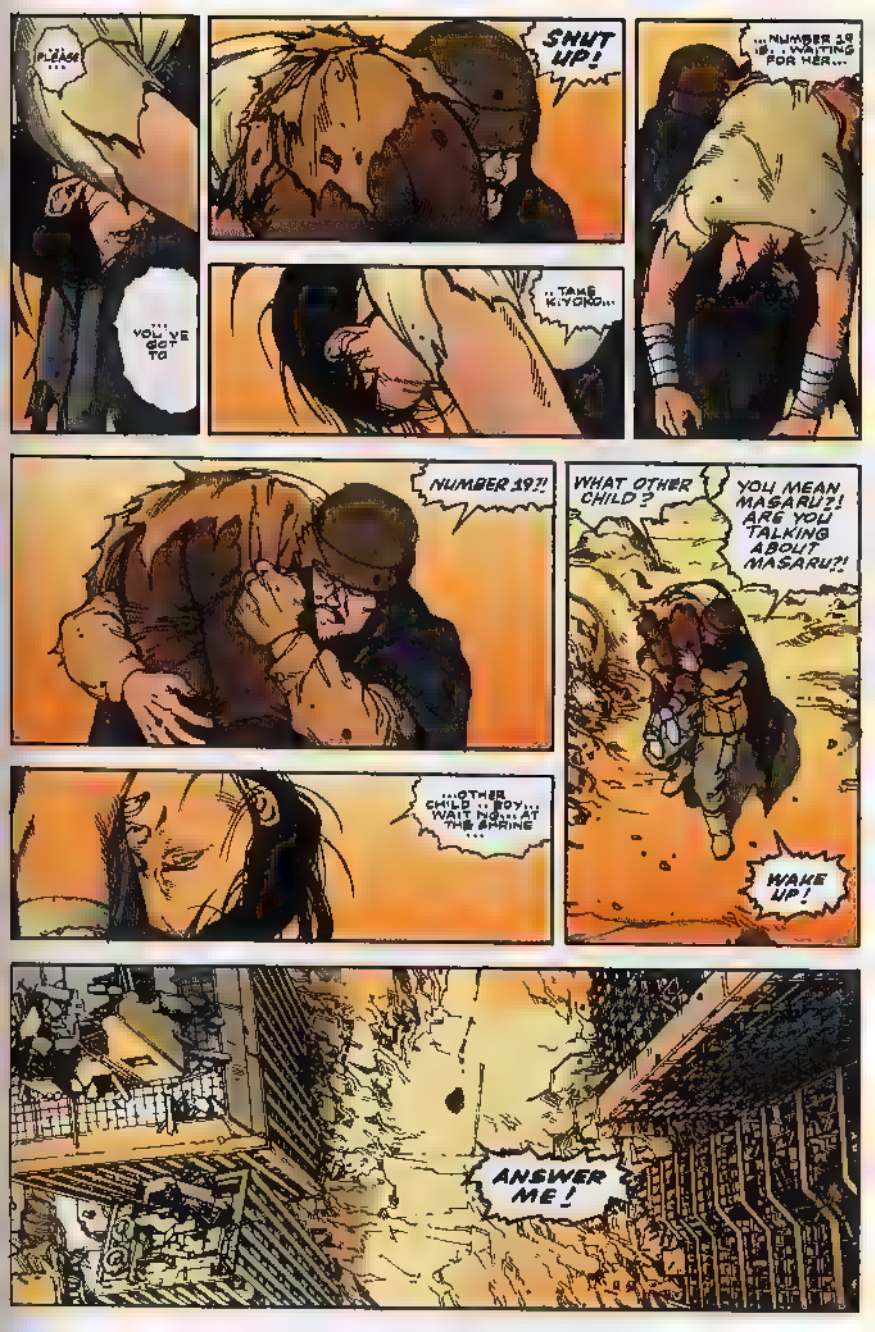

SWOOP
HUFF
PUFF
PUFF
PUFF
PUFF
PUFF

I HAVE A NEW ANNOUNCEMENT!
THE LITTLE BOY AND THE INTRUDER WITH HIM HAVE FOUND SHELTER WITH THE MONKS FROM MIYAKO'S TEMPLE.
THEY HAVE...
...ALREADY REACHED SANCTUARY!
WHAT?
THEY ARE IN MIYAKO'S SHRINE! THIS IS AN ACT OF WAR AGAINST OUR LORD AKIRA AND THE EMPIRE! MIYAKO MUST PAY!
MIYAKO..
THAT INTERFERING BITCH!


HM2
MY LADY, I HAVE NEWS.
THE MEN WE SENT OUT...
...HAVE JUST RETURNED
EXCELLENT!
ARE THE CHILDREN WITH THEM?


!
THE OTHER CHILD-- NUMBER 25 --WHERE IS SHE?
WE WERE ATTACKED BY TETSUO'S MEN
YES, BUT CHIYOKO WENT TO GET HER BACK!
SHE PROMISED ME!
DID THEY CAPTURE HER?!
I KNOW SHE CAN DO IT.
WHAT A PITY

...
...OH...
...THE LITTLE GAL...
...WHERE...
...ARE WE...?
...WH...
...WHO...
...WHERE IS ...KIYOKO...?


PLEASE...
...YOU'VE GOT TO
SHUT UP!
...TAKE KIYOKO...
...NUMBER 19 IS... WAITING FOR HER...
NUMBER 19?!
...OTHER CHILD... BOY... WAIT NO... AT THE SHRINE...
WHAT OTHER CHILD?
YOU MEAN MASARU?! ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT MASARU?!
WAKE UP!
ANSWER ME!

TAK

HMM...
MATCHES.
WHERE'D I PUT THOSE MATCHES?

NEXT ISSUE **THE RAGE AND THE TORMENT**

A LOOK AT KODANSHA NEW YORK

Prior to the publication of each issue of the Epic Comics version of **Akira,** every component of the Americanized comic is sent to Kodansha, Ltd. for approval and possible revisions. Kodansha is **Akira's** parent company and Japanese publisher, and maintains a New York office which, among other duties, oversees the Epic Comics production of **Akira.**

Noriyuki Okazaki, head of Kodansha New York's **Akira** section, describes his role in the production of **Akira** as "a quiet one." Along with his two assistants, Michael Palermo and Yoko Kariya, Okazaki supervises Yoko Umezawa's Japanese-to-English translation. Okazaki reviews Umezawa's translation and makes the necessary changes. He also translates directly, when Epic asks him for assistance on items that appear in **Akira,** but are not in the script, such as a street sign or billboard.

Kodansha New York, like Kodansha in Tokyo, carefully checks the changes and additions made on the new version of **Akira.** Often, minor errors in the **What Has Gone Before** text or in the paste-up of the English word balloons change the original intent. Okazaki, as well as Kodansha in Tokyo, is responsible for catching these errors and informing Epic so that necessary reparations can be made.

Noriyuki Okazaki and Michael Palermo (left) review **Akira** #17

Occasionally, Epic encounters problems that cannot be solved by Kodansha New York. Okazaki must then act as the primary liaison between Epic and Kodansha Tokyo, or even Katsuhiro Otomo. Unfortunately, this may sometimes cause a delay, as there is a time difference between New York and Tokyo.

"There are always time difference problems," says Okazaki. "I can't call Tokyo on a Friday afternoon, because there is no one in the office at 6 a.m., especially on a Saturday morning."

Both Epic and Okazaki must then wait until Monday to solve any of their immediate problems.

Okazaki has been working as an editor for Kodansha for more than twelve years. He has been in New York since 1982 when he came to New York both as a Kodansha Editorial Representative and as a graduate student in Anthropology at Columbia University. He describes his primary responsibilities as working on "fine art books," but has also worked on the editorial staff of some of Kodansha's weekly magazines. His studies of the differences and similarities between the U.S. and Japanese culture give him a unique perspective, and make him an appropriate liaison between Kodansha and Epic Comics.

The English-language version of the animated film **AKIRA** will play in the following cities during the month of May:

ATLANTA, GA
CINEPLEX ODEON PHIPPS THEATER
May 11—May 31

TULSA, OK
CINEMA AT WILLIAMS CENTER
May 4—10

SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA
PALM THEATER
May 4—17

WILLIAMSBURG, VA
WILLIAMSBURG THEATER
May 18—22

BELLINGHAM, WA
MT. BAKER THEATER
May 18—24

WASHINGTON, DC
BIOGRAPH THEATER
Special return engagement
May 25—31

KATSUHIRO OTOMO

YASUHITSU SUETAKE

MAMORU SHIOSAKI
SATOSHI TAKABATAKE

HIROSHI HIRATA

AKIRA SAITO

YOKO UMEZAWA

ROICHI YURI
HISATAKA NISHITANI

YUKA ANDO

NORIYURI OKAZAKI

JO DUFFY

STEVE OLIFF

DEVOPTICS COMPUTER CREW

MICHAEL HIGGINS

EDWARD LAZELLARI

MARK JAVIUS

MARGARET CLARK

CARL POTTS

Secrets whisper through Neo-Tokyo's shattered buildings, over and under its broken roadways. Secret alliances between Chiyoko and the Colonel, forged over the life of the child Kiyoko. Secrets passed back and forth between Lady Miyako and Tetsuo about the powers that stream through both of them. And always, the secrets within the unknowable mind of Akira, secrets awesome and terrible.

KATSUHIRO OTOMO'S

0 24885 23068 0
20

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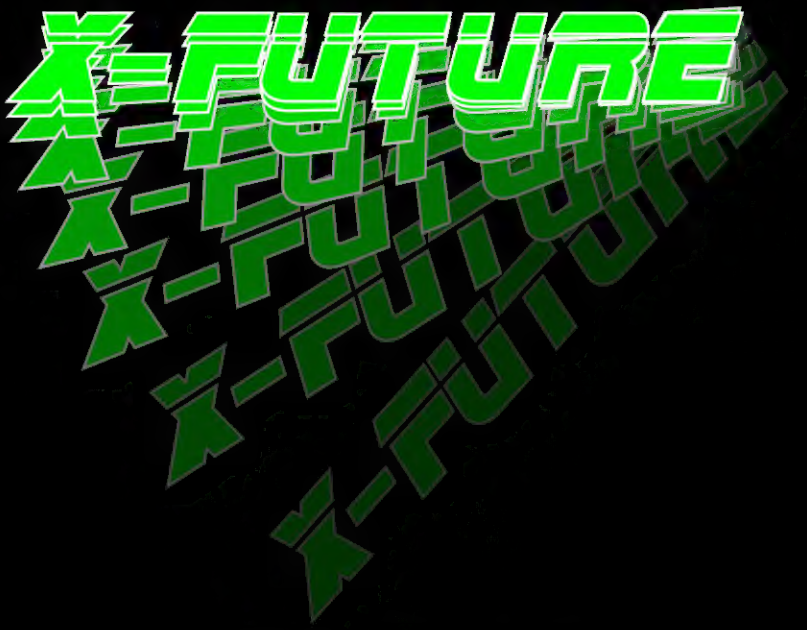
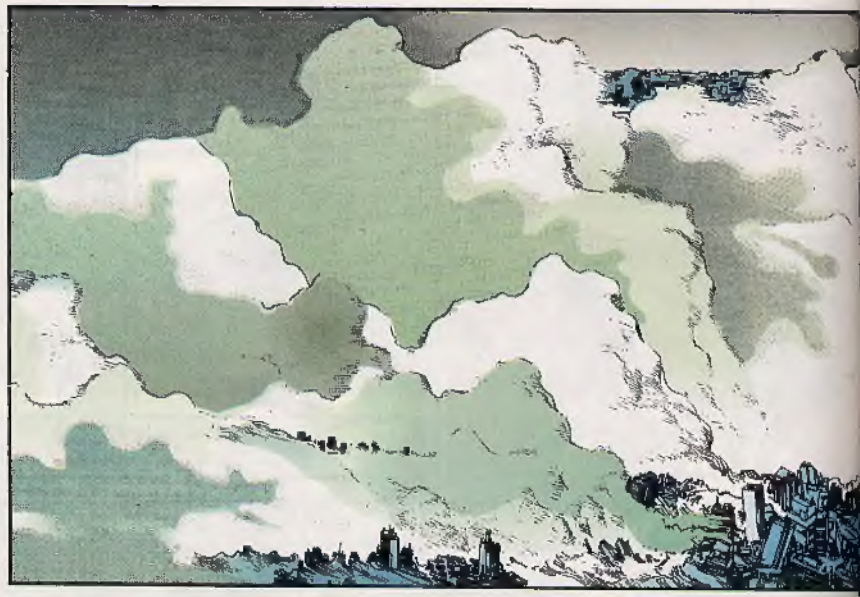
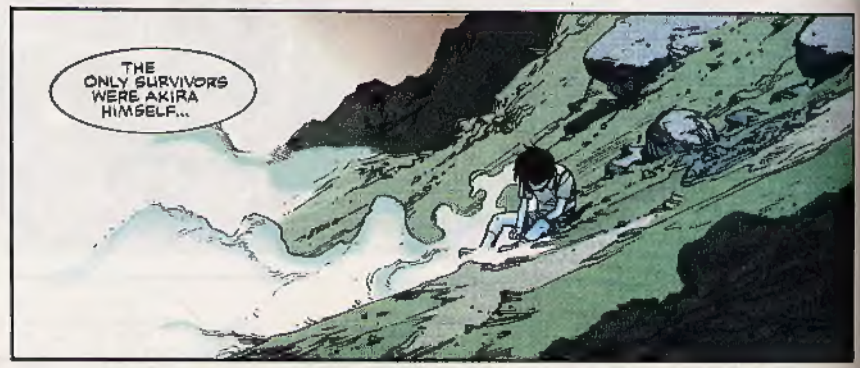


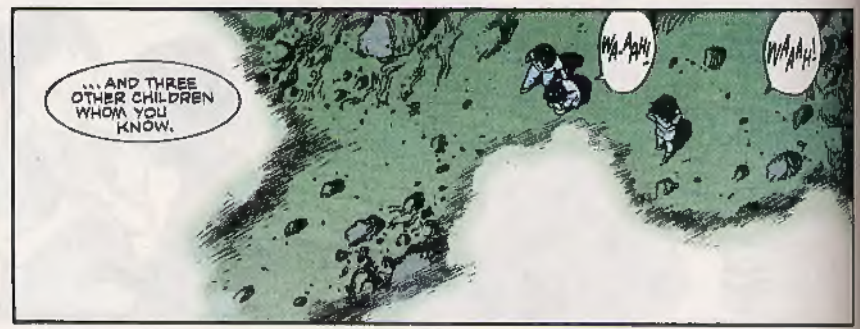
I love um

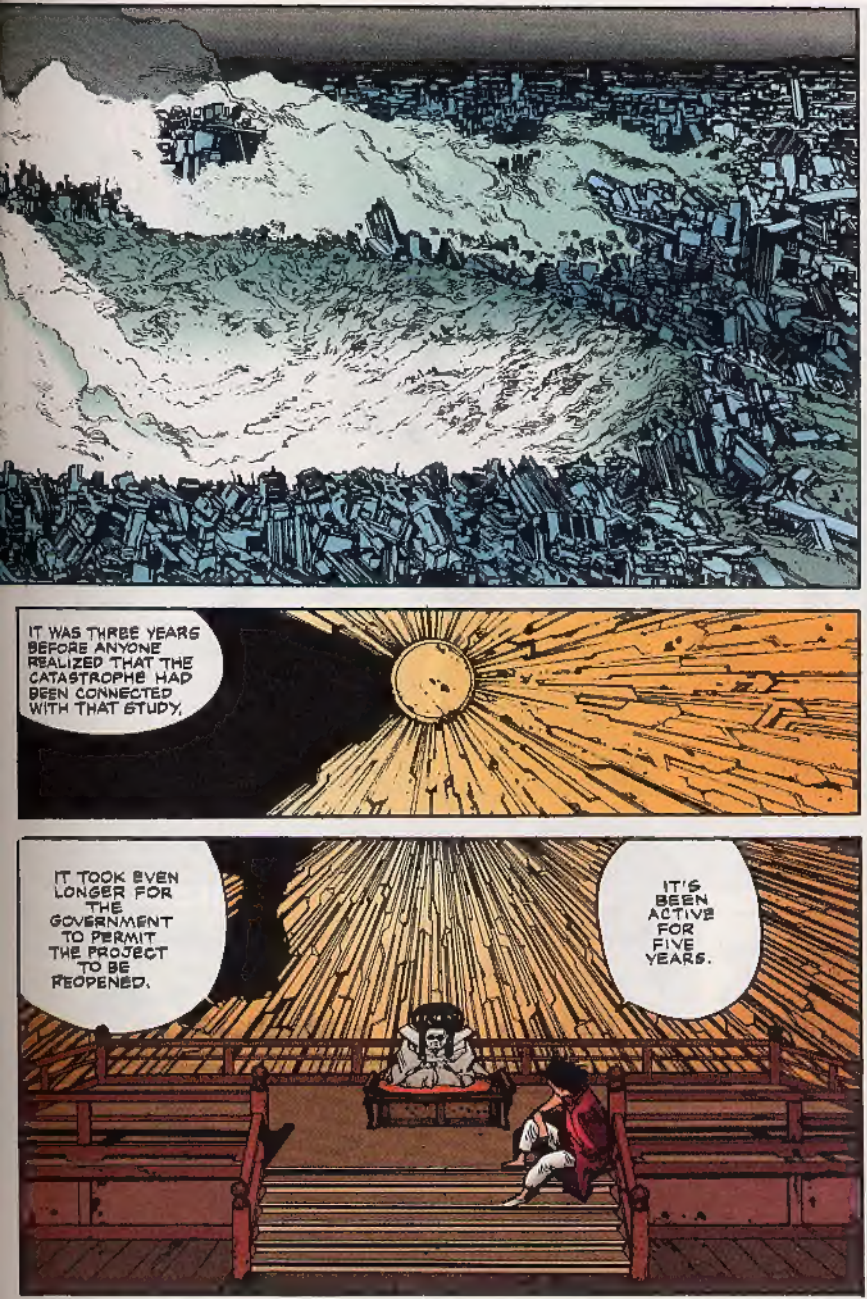
I buy um

I preserve um




THE ONLY SURVIVORS WERE AKIRA HIMSELF...


...AND THREE OTHER CHILDREN WHOM YOU KNOW.
WA-AAH!
WAAAH!


IT WAS THREE YEARS BEFORE ANYONE REALIZED THAT THE CATASTROPHE HAD BEEN CONNECTED WITH THAT STUDY.
IT TOOK EVEN LONGER FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO PERMIT THE PROJECT TO BE REOPENED.
IT'S BEEN ACTIVE FOR FIVE YEARS.